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The Assist

Helping to Improve Access to and Progress in the General Curriculum

April 2004

SPECIAL EDITION

Volume 3, No. 4

Important Changes at the MDE

Dear Readers,

Congratulations on completing another successful administration of MI-Access! The assessment materials should soon be on their way back to BETA/TASA, the MI-Access contractor, for scanning and scoring. Remember, all MI-Access assessment materials must be shipped back no later than April 9, 2004. If everything goes according to plan, MI-Access reports will be back in districts before the end of the school year. Thank you ahead of time for helping the process run smoothly.

If you have not had a chance to do so, please complete our online teacher and MI-Access coordinator feedback surveys. You may access them through the MI-Access Web page at **www.mi.gov/mi-access**. We rely on your feedback to help us continue to improve the assessment administration process. You may have noticed that many of your suggestions from last year were incorporated into the Winter 2004 materials.

As you may know, there have been some big changes at the Michigan Department of Education (MDE). The Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) has moved back to the MDE from the Michigan

Department of Treasury. In addition, a new office has been established, called the Office of Educational Assessment and Accountability (OEAA). Headed by Dr. Edward Roeber, the new office will oversee four programs: (1) the MEAP, (2) the Assessment for Students with Disabilities Program, (3) the Assessment of English Language Learners Program, and (4) Accountability.

I have been assigned to head the Assessment for Students with Disabilities Program within the OEAA. That means I will now be dealing with issues related to all state assessments for students with disabilities, including the MEAP, the MEAP with assessment accommodations, MI-Access, ELL-Access, and Section 504. This is a very important step forward in assuring appropriate state assessments for all students with disabilities.

By the time you have this issue of *The Assist*, we will be starting the MI-Access Phase 2.1 Item Tryout. Thank you to all the districts, schools, teachers, and students who are participating in the tryout. We could not do it without you. Please know that your

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NOTES FROM THE CONTRACTOR TO MI-ACCESS COORDINATORS

Winter 2004 MI-Access materials are due back to BETA/TASA for scoring.

The Winter 2004 MI-Access assessment window is over (as of March 31). It is now time to prepare your materials for shipment back to BETA/TASA if you have not already done so. **Remember, materials shipped after April 9th will not be scored.** That date was set to allow sufficient time for assessment materials to be scanned and scored, and reports to be produced and distributed to districts before the end of the school year. Please be sure to follow the packing and shipping procedures detailed in the *MI-Access Winter 2004 Coordinator and Assessment Administrator Manual*. If you have any questions,

call the Toll-free MI-Access Hotline at 1-888-382-4246 or send an e-mail message to mi-access@tasa.com. Our staff will be happy to assist you.

Receiving and distributing Spring 2004 MI-Access Phase 2.1 Item Tryout materials

Districts selected to participate in the Phase 2.1 Item Tryout should have received their assessment materials by now. If your district was selected to participate and the District MI-Access Coordinator has not yet received the materials, have him or her contact BETA/TASA immediately using the MI-Access Toll-free Hotline (1-888-382-4246). The assessment window is **April 1 through June 4, 2004**.

Important Changes at the MDE

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efforts this spring will help ensure that we develop reliable and valid assessments that give Phase 2.1 students a true opportunity to participate fully and meaningfully in state assessment.

As always, the April issue of *The Assist* is designed to help Individualized Education Program (IEP) Teams as they prepare for their meetings. You will notice that some of the articles are repeated from last year. Please note that we have updated information in

them, so read the articles carefully and have IEP Teams use the most current versions as a resource. We hope you find the articles helpful and that you will share them with your colleagues, parents, and students as appropriate.

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IDEAS TIPS SUGGESTIONS

If you have ideas, suggestions, or
tips you would like to see included in
The Assist, send them to
mi-access@tasa.com.





Planning Your Student's Victory IEP Garden

Stan Masters

Coordinator – Curriculum, Assessment, and
School Improvement Lenawee ISD and District MI-Access Coordinator

Spring has sprung and this school year is about to end. Now is a great time to plant MI-Access seeds for reaping next year. Here are some ideas for your upcoming IEP table discussions regarding participation in statewide assessment.

1. **Check the student's harvest from 2003/2004.** MI-Access is designed to provide assessment results immediately. Review your student's results in light of his or her goals. What areas of growth did you find? What changes in instruction can be made based upon his or her assessment results? IEP Teams need to look at student achievement through statewide assessment results as well as through classroom performance assessments. **MI-Access allows teachers to set high expectations for student performance.**
2. **Read more about how to use AUEN in your planting mix.** AUEN is a good resource for helping teachers and IEP Teams identify their students' level of independence. Having a deeper understanding of AUEN and the various levels will allow the team to use tools—like the decision-making checklist and flow chart on pages 10 and 11—more effectively. The AUEN also is a valuable resource for teachers looking for instructional strategies and contexts for performance assessment in their classrooms. **MI-Access provides an opportunity for all students with disabilities to participate in statewide assessment, just as they do instruction.**

3. **Pick the right variety of assessments for your students.** Michigan is fortunate to have both the Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) and MI-Access available for its students. The IEP documentation provides teams with the opportunity to determine which assessment program is best for its students in each content area. In making that decision, encourage team members to look at released items from the MEAP as well as the sample assessment booklets in your 2003/2004 MI-Access training materials. Knowing the format and content of the assessments will help with choosing the appropriate one for your student and with deciding which accommodations may be necessary to minimize your student's disability. **MI-Access allows functional independence students to take the MEAP with assessment accommodations in one content area and the Interim Phase 2 BRIGANCE (the assessment in use until Michigan's own Phase 2 MI-Access assessments are available) in another.**

Preparation this spring takes time and communication, but in the end it will yield a bountiful harvest of student success. I recommend concentrating on documentation and on professional development to equip your IEP Team with the tools necessary to ensure that each student has a rich, textured blend of instruction and assessment in order to grow.

Contact Stan Masters about the content of this article at smasters@lisd.k12.mi.us.

TOOLS FOR IEP DECISION-MAKING

Deciding which state assessment a student should take is not an easy task. There are several options to consider and every student is unique. Unfortunately, there is no one-size-fits-all solution.

To assist with the decision-making process, the Office of Special Education and Early Intervention Services (OSE/EIS) and the new Assessment for Students with Disabilities Program (ASWDP) have developed five decision-making tools for IEP Teams to use.

1. Draft Guidelines for Determining Participation in State Assessment for Students with Disabilities. The Guidelines are required by both No Child Left Behind (NCLB)¹ and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA),² and they provide information IEP Teams need to determine which state assessment is most appropriate for their students. If you do not have a copy of the Draft Guidelines, you may obtain one at the MI-Access Web page (www.mi.gov/mi-access).

2. A twenty-minute video called "In Michigan, All Kids Count! PREVIEW." You may want to have IEP Team members review the tape prior to your meeting so everyone is familiar with MI-Access. Multiple copies of the video were sent to every District MI-Access Coordinator in spring 2002. If you need more copies, feel free to duplicate those you already have or contact your ISD or REMC for a copy.

3. Student Characteristics Matrix. The matrix describes key student characteristics that will help IEP Teams determine their student's level of independence and, consequently, the most appropriate state assessment for him or her.

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TOOLS FOR IEP DECISION-MAKING

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4. A Decision-making Flow Chart (see page 10) and Checklist (see page 11). These tools pinpoint the critical assessment decisions IEP Teams must make. Using the flow chart and/or checklist should help teams keep their meetings focused and productive.

5. Individualized Education Program Team Manual. The ASWDP and the OSE/EIS worked together to update the manual which guides teams through the entire IEP process.

Please share these tools with IEP Teams as they consider and discuss the state assessment portion of the IEP. You may also want to share with them the article on page 6, entitled "Completing the IEP Assessment Form," and the article on page 12 "MEAP Assessment Accommodations."

¹ NCLB § 200.12 requires states to include in their accountability systems guidelines for identifying the students with disabilities who should take alternate assessments and requires that states report on the number of students who take an alternate assessment.

² IDEA § 300.138 (b)(1) develops guidelines for the participation of children with disabilities in alternate assessments for those children who cannot participate in state- and district-wide assessment programs.

2003/2004 State Board of Education Strategic Goal

Attain substantial and meaningful improvement in academic achievement for all students/children with primary emphasis on high priority schools and students.

Revised at the October 23, 2003
Board Meeting

Tools for Informing Parents— Ahead of Time — About MI-Access

Since parents are vital members of IEP Teams, they need to come to IEP meetings prepared to contribute. One way schools can help them is by sending a letter out in advance of the meeting informing them about MI-Access and their responsibility in helping to determine which state assessment their child (or children) will take. The Assessment for Students with Disabilities Program has prepared a sample letter (see page 5) that may be modified for local purposes.

In addition to the sample letter, there are other tools you may want to share with parents ahead of time or make available through your lending library, including

- the "In Michigan All Kids Count! PREVIEW" videotape, which briefly explains MI-Access, why it was developed, and how it will be used;
- the *Draft Guidelines for Determining Participation in State Assessment for Students with Disabilities*, which includes information to help IEP Teams make informed assessment decisions;
- the flow chart and checklist included in this issue of *The Assist*;
- the MDE Web site www.mi.gov/mde (click on "Assessment and Accountability");
- the Winter 2004 MI-Access general brochure (camera-ready copies are available at the

MI-Access Web page at www.mi.gov/mi-access);

- Section 2 of the 2003/2004 MI-Access Training Materials, which provides a brief explanation of MI-Access, who it is for, and how it is designed;
- the Participation and Supported Independence sample assessment booklets, which can be found at the MI-Access Web page at www.mi.gov/mi-access (seeing the booklets may help parents better understand what teachers are looking for during assessment observations); and
- the Interim Phase 2 BRIGANCE Online Learning Program, which is available at the MI-Access Information Center at www.mi-access.info (click on "Online Learning").

All of these materials (except for the Online Learning Program) can be duplicated by schools and districts and shared as needed.

You also may want to let parents know that the MI-Access Web page has additional information on MI-Access, including Q & As, surveys, and more.

Remember, the more information parents have *before* IEP Team meetings, the better able they will be to assist with making assessment decisions. Since they have not necessarily had the benefit of attending conferences, watching teleconferences, or reviewing training materials, they need MI-Access information from you.

(Pre-IEP Team Meeting)

Dear (name):

In addition to our many responsibilities as IEP Team members, one important decision must be made this year—that is, in which state assessment your child will take part. Because you are a vital member of the team, we need your help with that decision.

As you may know, Michigan has two assessment programs from which we can choose: the Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) and MI-Access, Michigan's Alternate Assessment Program. When we meet in (fill in blank) we will need to determine—as a team—which of these programs is most appropriate for your child.

The state has developed several tools that can help us with making our decision. To that end, we are sending you some of those tools to review ahead of time, including

- (list of materials mailed)

We may have several other tools in our lending library that you also want to review before our meeting, including

- (list of additional tools not mailed but available for review)

If you would like to look at the materials just described, simply (include instructions for how they can obtain copies or come in and view the additional materials).

You may also want to visit the Michigan Department of Education's Web site to learn more about MEAP and MI-Access. To do that, go to **www.mi.gov/mde**. In the left-hand column, click on "Assessment and Accountability."

If you have any questions about the MEAP or MI-Access that you would like answered before our meeting, please feel free to call me at (include phone number of appropriate contact person) or you may call your child's teacher at (include phone number). We would be happy to assist you, as needed, in becoming more comfortable with the decision before us.

Thank you and we look forward to seeing you on (fill in date of meeting).

Sincerely,

(Fill in appropriate signature)

Completing the IEP Assessment Form

The form below is an excerpt from the revised model *Individualized Education Program Manual State and District-wide Assessment Form*, which can be found in the MDE Office of Special Education and Early Intervention Services' *Individualized Education Program Team Manual* (January 2003). The form has been included in this issue of *The Assist* because the MDE wants IEP Team members to know that, as required by IDEA, it has been revised and calls for more detailed information on state assessment than in previous years.

Please note that since this form was finalized, the reference to "Students Eligible for Phase 2" is no longer applicable. This should now read

"Interim Phase 2 BRIGANCE ELA and/or Mathematics." As you know, the IEP Team no longer can determine what alternate assessments will be administered to Phase 2 students. Instead, until 2005/2006, the Interim Phase 2 BRIGANCE assessments must be administered to all Phase 2 students. Michigan's own Phase 2 MI-Access assessments for grades 3-8 and 11 will be administered starting in 2005/2006.

If the IEP Team determines that a student is not taking the MEAP or the MEAP with assessment accommodations, it must document the reason why the assessment(s) are not appropriate. The reason should be related to the student's level of independence, curriculum, and instruction. This is a

very important piece of information if your district plans to apply to the state for an exception to the 1% cap, which refers to the number of "proficient" MI-Access scores that can be used when calculating your district's NCLB Adequate Yearly Progress.

IEP Teams should also note that the 2004/2005 school year is the year that National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) assessments are administered to selected schools in specific content areas. If a Title 1 school is selected for the sample, the school must participate; therefore the IEP Team will also need to discuss the student's participation in NAEP and any needed assessment accommodations. (See the article on page 8 for more details.)

☐ MEAP, MI-Access are not given at the grade levels covered by this IEP.

Statewide Assessment	Assessment Appropriate?		If yes, list appropriate accommodations if needed. If no, state the reason why the MEAP content area is inappropriate and indicate the appropriate MI-Access assessment.	Standard accommodations?	
	Yes	No		Yes	No
MEAP					
English Language Arts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Mathematics	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Science	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Social Studies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
MI-Access					
Eligible for Phase 2*	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Supported Independence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Participation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			

*For Phase 2 eligible students, indicate what other standardized achievement assessments the student will be administered.

MI-Access Participation: It's Not Too Early to Plan for the Next Assessment!

By Deborah Norton (Rochester Community Schools), Peg Steeh (Bloomfield Hills Public Schools), and Penny Zago (retired from the MDE Office of Special Education and Early Intervention Services)

As the MI-Access assessment window draws to a close, teachers are shifting their focus to spring IEP Team meetings and end-of-school-year preparations. This is a busy time of year. It also is a good time to begin planning for the next MI-Access Participation assessment. IEP Team meetings offer ideal opportunities to begin talking about the "as expected"

statements that are key to measuring Participation student performance.

MI-Access has a helpful tool to guide teachers, parents, and other members of the IEP Team as they determine how a student may be expected to respond to the opportunity to participate in MI-Access assessment activities. Developed

by educators in the field with input from classroom teachers, the *Determining As Expected for This Student Worksheet* provides clarifications and examples to help IEP Team members talk about expected student behaviors.

When asked about teacher response to

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MI-Access Participation

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the worksheet, the Wing Lake Developmental Center School MI-Access Coordinator reported, “They loved it. [The worksheet] made determining ‘as expecteds’ so easy. It gave everyone the focus needed to determine them.” She noted that using the worksheet also helped parents understand the assessment and the “as expecteds.”

You may download the *Determining As Expecteds for This Student Worksheet* from the MI-Access Information Center (www.mi-access.info) under “Teleconference Materials” or from the MI-Access Web page (www.mi.gov/mi-access) under “Resources.”

Although the IEP meeting brings all team members together, sufficient time may or may not be available during the meeting to use the worksheet. The important thing to remember is that assessment administrators/teachers do not determine “as expecteds” by themselves. The input of parents and others who work with the student is critical to determining meaningful and reliable “as expecteds.” The worksheet facilitates a common understanding and conversation about those “as expecteds.”

Regardless when you use the worksheet, the following schedule suggests ways to coordinate the IEP Team meeting and the process of determining “as expecteds.”

Before the IEP Team meeting:

1. Review the Performance Expectations (PEs) on which the student will be assessed the next time he/she participates in the assessment. (See the table at right.)
2. Consider some of the contexts in which each PE might be assessed

(such as participating in instructional routines, communicating with others, participating in safety routines, participating in dressing routines, or moving through familiar buildings).

3. Check the *Determining As Expecteds for This Student Worksheet* to clarify the performance requirements for the PEs on which the student will be assessed.
4. Share the above information with parents and other IEP Team members, inviting their input. (Whenever “as expecteds” are determined, parents and others need to have some prior information for the conversation to be most effective.)

During the IEP Team meeting:

5. Bring the above information and the worksheet to the IEP meeting.
6. If time permits, collaboratively determine “as expecteds” for this

student for each of the Performance Requirements in the PEs to be assessed. Record the decisions on the *Determining As Expecteds for This Student Worksheet*.

7. If there is not time for this conversation during the IEP meeting, simply share the information gathered before the IEP meeting as well as the worksheet and let team members know you will be soliciting their input at another time. (This does not have to be another formal IEP meeting.)

After the IEP Team meeting:

8. If the worksheet is completed with collaboratively-determined “as expecteds,” file it away until the next time the student is assessed.
9. If the worksheet is not completed at this time, mark your calendar and follow up with other IEP Team members, including parents, to gather their input prior to next year’s assessment window.

Grades at Which MI-Access Participation Performance Expectations (PEs) Are Assessed					
PE	Grades				
	4	7	8	11A	11B
PE 1: Engage in typical patterns of leisure and productive activities.	X				
PE 2: Engage in typical patterns of interaction.	X		X		X
PE 3: Participate in effective communication cycles.		X		X	
PE 4: Participate in personal care, health, and safety routines.	X		X		X
PE 5: Reach desired locations safely within familiar environments.		X		X	



The National Assessment of Educational Progress and No Child Left Behind

When IEP Teams meet, team members need to discuss how their student will be assessed locally and at the state level. In addition, they may have to talk about their student's participation in a national assessment program called the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). Since many people are unfamiliar with the NAEP, we have prepared the following introductory article. It may be shared with IEP Teams to familiarize them with the national assessment program in which Michigan schools must participate if they are selected by the NAEP.

IEP Team members also need to know that NAEP has its own accommodation guidelines that need to be considered. To obtain information about available assessment accommodations, go to <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard>, click on an assessment subject area (such as reading or mathematics), and then click on "learn who took the assessment and how the assessment is administered." Teams can see what accommodations are allowed and consider which ones, if any, are necessary for their individual students.

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), which is often referred to as the "Nation's Report Card," is an ongoing national assessment of what America's students know and can do in various subject areas, including, but not limited to, reading, writing, mathematics, science, world geography, U.S. history, civics, and art. Since 1969, NAEP assessments have been administered voluntarily to students across the nation in an effort to generate data showing what students are learning at critical junctures in their school experience. Those data are then used by policymakers at the national and state level to formulate education policy.

NAEP has two primary goals: to measure student achievement in the context of instructional experiences and to track change in the achievement of fourth-, eighth-, and twelfth-graders over time in selected content areas. For example, the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), which is responsible for carrying out the NAEP Project, recently reported that the percentage of fourth- and eighth-graders who performed at or above the Proficient level in reading was higher in 2003 than in 1992, while the 12th-grade percentage at this level was lower.

Unlike many standardized assessments, NAEP assessment results are

not reported by individual students or schools, but instead by populations of students (e.g., fourth- or eighth-graders) and subgroups of those populations (e.g., female students, Hispanic students). The results are based on representative samples of students pulled from across the country or from across a specific state.

During the 2004/2005 school year, NAEP will conduct state assessments in reading, mathematics, and science at grades 4 and 8. Schools that have been selected for sampling will be notified in early fall. It is expected that approximately 300 Michigan schools will be included in the 2005 NAEP state sample.

While full participation in NAEP assessments has always been voluntary for every pupil, school district, and state, federal law requires that all states and school districts that receive Title I funds and are selected for the NAEP sample, must, at a minimum, participate in NAEP reading and mathematics assessments at fourth and eighth grades. Michigan has agreed to participate in science assessments as well.

Prior to 1996, NAEP did not have a policy to allow assessment accommodations for students with disabilities or English language learners, which resulted in the exclusion of some special needs students. With the passage of the

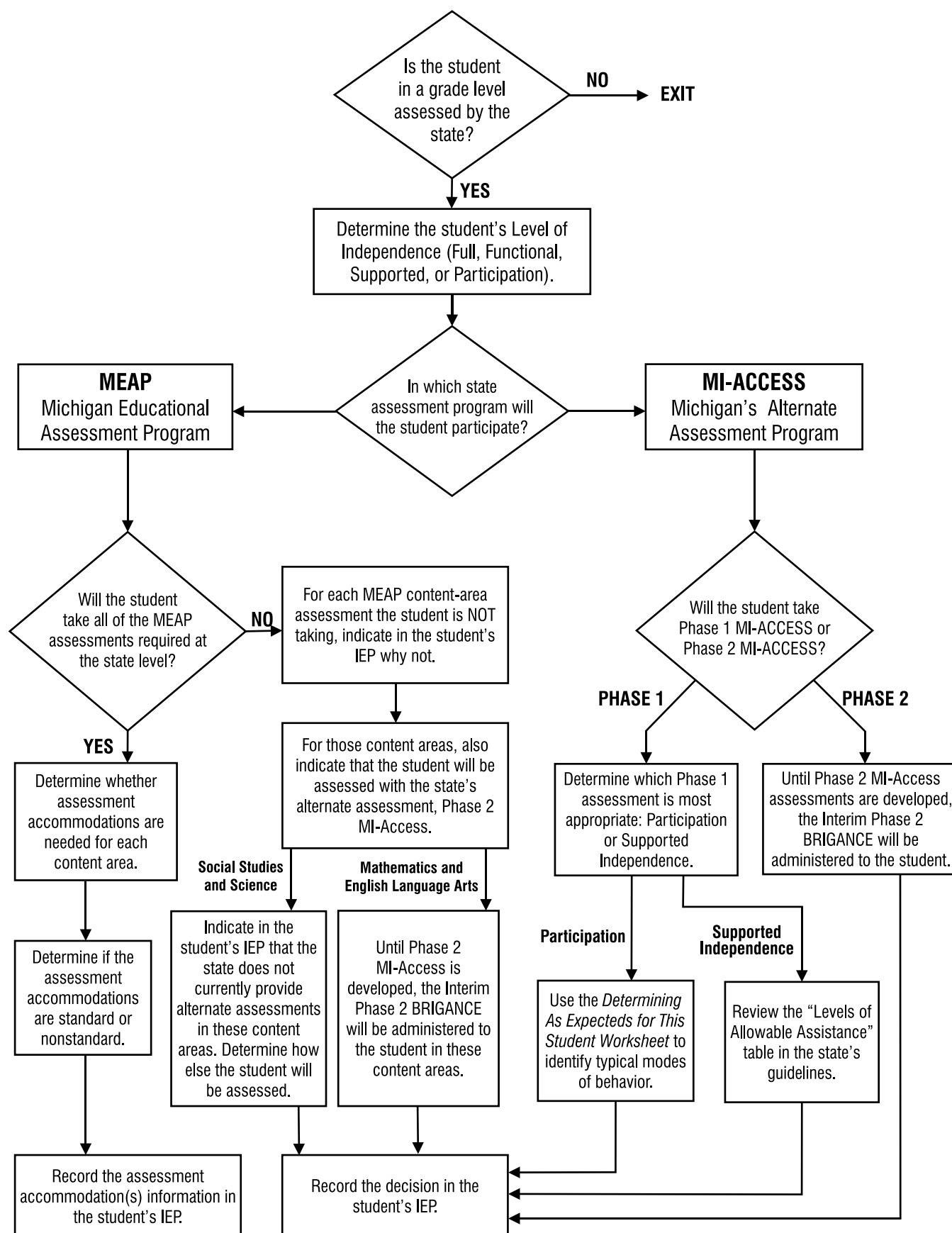
Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) in 1997, however, NAEP began studying the effect of assessment accommodations on assessment results. The results of that study led to a two-pronged approach to data collection: (1) accommodations were allowed in all subject areas where new trend lines were being introduced and (2) sample data for existing trend lines were split into two categories—one where testing accommodations were allowed and one where they were not. That two-pronged approach enabled the program to maintain data trends to the past and begin new trend baselines in which accommodations were permitted. That approach was used until 2002 when the NCES began reporting NAEP results only from samples in which assessment accommodations were allowed.

For more information about the NAEP Project, go to <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/>. Once there, you may obtain state and national data. You may also obtain demographic information for Michigan, view achievement levels (as well as scale scores), and compare Michigan's assessment scores with those of other states. To learn more about NAEP, NCLB, and Michigan's involvement with the project, contact Kimberly Young, NAEP Coordinator at 517-241-2360 or youngk1@michigan.gov.

Using Student Information to Determine the Appropriate State Assessment for Students with Disabilities

Level of Independence	Student Characteristics	Anticipated Life Roles	Curriculum	Instruction	Likely State Assessment
Full Independence	Have physical, emotional, or learning disabilities. Function in the normal range of intelligence. Have the cognitive ability to transfer or generalize learning across performance contexts. Have the capacity to apply knowledge and skills to the tasks, problems, or activities encountered in life.	Are expected to achieve full independence in adulthood.	Based on the Michigan Curriculum Framework's Content Standards and Benchmarks.	May require accommodations, assistive devices, adaptive strategies, and/or technology to assure student success in the general curriculum. Needs to include knowledge and skills needed to effectively use the above.	MEAP with or without accommodations. Content areas: English language arts and mathematics
Functional Independence (Phase 2.2)* <i>*Note: Specific student characteristics are still under discussion</i>	Do not necessarily have cognitive impairments. Can transfer and generalize learning across performance contexts. Impairments, however, impact their (1) opportunities to learn, (2) progress in the general education curriculum, and/or (3) ability to demonstrate what they know and are able to do.	Are expected to achieve at least a functional level of independence in adulthood. May move closer to or achieve full independence as adults as the impact of impairments is ameliorated over time by appropriate interventions and student learning.	Based on the Michigan Curriculum Framework's standards, benchmarks, and extended benchmarks that address disability-specific learning needs (e.g., American Sign Language, Braille, mobility, and affective strategies).	Direct instruction with practical application in real world contexts. Effective classroom behavior and coping skills need to be taught.	MEAP with or without accommodations and/or Phase 2.2 MI-Access assessments.* Content areas: English language arts and mathematics. <i>*Note: The Interim Phase 2 BRIGANCE will be used until Phase 2.2 MI-Access assessments are available.</i>
Functional Independence (Phase 2.1)	Have, or function as if they have, mild cognitive impairments that impact their ability to transfer and generalize learning across performance contexts. Learning rate is significantly slower than age-level peers (roughly one-half to three-quarters the rate). Restricted knowledge base. Tend not to be very aware of environmental cues or details. Do not learn incidentally.	Are expected to achieve a functional level of independence in adulthood.	Based on the Michigan Curriculum Framework's standards and extended benchmarks. Focuses on basic academics, social effectiveness, health and fitness, community access and use, work, and personal and family living. Stresses minimal reliance on others and maximum functional independence.	Direct instruction and repetition with practical, authentic, and concrete experiences reflecting real world contexts. After mastery should continue to present concept/skill through gradually varying contexts and instructional situations to maximize knowledge/skill transfer. Includes frequent reminders to be alert to environmental cues. Highlights salient information and reduces distracting and irrelevant stimuli.	MI-Access Functional Independence. Content areas: English language arts, and mathematics.* <i>*Note: The Interim Phase 2 BRIGANCE will be used until Phase 2.1 MI-Access assessments are available.</i>
Supported Independence	Have, or function as if they have, moderate cognitive impairments that seriously impact their ability to generalize or transfer learning.	Are expected to achieve supported independence in adulthood. Will require some supervision throughout lives, but can learn skills to maximize independence.	Based on the Michigan Curriculum Framework's standards and benchmarks.	Direct instruction carried out within settings in which students are and will be expected to function.	MI-Access Supported Independence
Participation	Have, or function as if they have, severe or profound cognitive impairments that preclude their ability to (or our skills to ascertain their abilities to) generalize learning.	Are expected to participate in major adult living roles. Will require extensive, ongoing support in all areas of functioning throughout life. Will be dependent on others for most, if not all, daily living needs.	Focuses on the non-core content standards (career and employability, technology, health, and physical education) and instructional strategies provided in such tools as the AUN.	Requires collaboration among teachers, parents, and therapists to determine the "maximum extent possible concept" for each student. Encourages consistent instructional focus among educators. Requires that home, school, and community work together to integrate each student as much as possible into major life roles. Includes use of assistive devices and accommodations.	MI-Access Participation

IEP Team State Assessment Decision-Making Flow Chart



IEP Team State Assessment Decision-Making Checklist

Using the *Guidelines for Determining Participation in State Assessment for Students with Disabilities...*

- ☐ Determine whether the student is in a grade level assessed by the state. If so, proceed with the checklist.
- ☐ Review the four “levels of independence” or how your student will likely function cognitively in adult life roles. Is your student Full, Functional, Supported, or Participation? (The “At a Glance” Table in the state’s guidelines may be helpful.) Remember, this decision is based on the student’s cognitive functioning level, not on his or her special education category or physical disability(ies).
- ☐ Review the assessment options in the Michigan Educational Assessment System (MEAS), including the Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP), the MEAP with assessment accommodations (standard and nonstandard), Phase 1 MI-Access, and Phase 2 MI-Access.
- ☐ Use the student’s level of independence to determine which state assessment program—the MEAP or MI-Access—is most appropriate for him or her.
- ☐ If the team chooses the MEAP, determine if the student will take one or more of the MEAP assessments required at that grade level. You must go through this, content area by content area.
- ☐ For **each** content area, determine whether the student will need assessment accommodations and specify which ones the IEP Team recommends. Keep in mind that some accommodations are considered “standard” while others are considered “nonstandard.” If the team chooses nonstandard accommodations, the student’s score will not be eligible for Merit Awards and it will be counted in Adequate Yearly Progress calculations as a zero or “not proficient.”
- ☐ As required by IDEA, if the IEP Team determines that it is inappropriate for the student to participate in a MEAP content-area assessment (English Language Arts, as an example), the Interim Phase 2 BRIGANCE must be administered until Phase 2 MI-Access assessments are developed and implemented.
- ☐ Indicate in the student’s IEP why the MEAP content-area assessment(s) is inappropriate for him or her.
- ☐ If the team chooses MI-Access as the student’s state assessment program, determine whether MI-Access Participation, MI-Access Supported Independence, or Phase 2 MI-Access is most appropriate.
- ☐ If the team chooses MI-Access Participation, use the *Determining ‘As Expecteds For This Student’ Worksheet* posted at **www.mi-access.info** (click on “Teleconference Materials”) to provide the student’s teacher with guidance on how the student behaves in specific situations. The behavior should reflect the student’s curriculum and instruction.
- ☐ If the team chooses MI-Access Supported Independence, review the “Levels of Allowable Assistance” Table in the state’s guidelines to see what assistance will be allowed the student during the assessment. Levels of Allowable Assistance vary by student age.
- ☐ If the team determines that the student should participate in Phase 2 MI-Access, the Interim Phase 2 BRIGANCE will be administered to the student until Michigan’s Phase 2 assessments are developed. In the content areas where Interim Phase 2 BRIGANCE assessments are not available (science and social studies), the IEP Team must determine how else the student will be assessed.

MEAP Assessment Accommodations

If IEP Teams determine that their student should participate in one or more of the Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) assessments, they will need to decide whether or not the student—because of his or her disability—needs assessment accommodations. In making that decision, keep in mind that some accommodations are considered “standard” while others are considered “nonstandard.” Why does it matter? Because when nonstandard accommodations are used, the student’s score is NOT eligible for Merit Awards or endorsements. In addition, while the student **will** count as being assessed for the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) participation rate, the student’s **score** will count as a zero, or “not proficient,” in Adequate Yearly Progress calculations. The Assessment of Students with Disabilities Program wants to make sure that IEP Teams are fully aware of these ramifications.

The article below provides a full listing of both standard and nonstandard accommodations, to which IEP Teams may want to refer during their team meetings. The lists were taken directly from the Michigan Merit Award Board Resolution 2001-02: Establishment of Standard Assessment Accommodations for Purposes of Michigan Merit Award. The lists can also be obtained on the MDE Web site (www.mi.gov/mde) and in the Draft Guidelines for Determining Participation in State Assessment for Students with Disabilities.

As indicated in the MEAP Coordinator Handbook and Test Administrator Manual, all questions related to MEAP assessment accommodations for students with disabilities should be e-mailed to Peggy Dutcher, Coordinator, Assessment for Students with Disabilities Program, at dutcherp@mi.gov. Additional information related to the MEAP and MI-Access can be found at www.mi.gov/mde. Click on “Assessment and School Accountability.”

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS RESOLVED:

The following test accommodations will be considered “standard accommodations” for Michigan Merit Award purposes. Accommodations in italics with an * in front may be used as appropriate for students with disabilities and Limited English Proficient students (LEP).

STANDARD ACCOMMODATIONS

*In addition to students with disabilities, these accommodations may be used as appropriate for LEP students.

Scheduling

- * Provision of additional testing time
- * Allowance of frequent or extended supervised breaks
- * Administration of the test at a time most beneficial to the student, with appropriate supervision by a school district professional

Location

- Provision for test administration at home or in a care facility with

appropriate supervision by a school district professional

- Provision for distraction-free space or alternate location (e.g., study carrel, front of classroom)
- Placement of student where he/she is most comfortable (e.g., front of room, back of room)
- * Administration of test in an ESL or special education classroom
- Provision for individual test administration (supervised)
- Provision for special lighting
- Provision of adaptive or special furniture
- Provision for freedom to move, stand, or pace during an individualized test administration
- Provision of special acoustics
- * Provisions for test administration in a small group setting
- Provision of soft, calming music to minimize distractions

Assistance with Test Directions

- * Reading all directions to student in English or in native language, pro-

vided that the student is receiving native language instruction at least part of the time.

- Rereading of directions for each subtask, as required
- Use of directions that have been highlighted
- Simplification of language in directions (paraphrase)
- Emphasis on verbs in directions
- * Provision for student restatement of directions in his or her own words
- Use of sign language or oral interpreters for directions and sample items
- * Clarification of directions by asking students to restate them

Assistance during Assessment

- * Administration of test by ESL staff, special education teacher, or similarly qualified person
- Reading of Math, Social Studies, Science, and Writing assessment

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Michigan Merit Award Board Resolution 2001-02

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content and questions to student in English or in native language, provided that the student is receiving native language instruction, at least part of the time. (Note: Reading Parts 2A, 2B, or 3 of the ELA test to a student is a nonstandard accommodation, since these tests are measures of reading or listening to English.)

- Signing of assessment content and questions to student except for the reading test (Note: Reading Part 2A or 2B of the ELA test to a student is a nonstandard accommodation.)
- Use of page-turner
- Recording of student responses (writing or audiotape)
- Placement of teacher/proctor near student

Equipment and Assistive Technology

- Use of talking calculator (mathematics test only)
- User of sign language to indicate student response, except for constructed-response items
- Use of text-talk converter, except for the reading and listening tests (Note: Reading Part 2A, 2B or 3 of the ELA test to a student is a nonstandard accommodation.)
- Use of visual magnification devices
- Use of auditory amplification devices
- Use of masks, overlays, or markers to maintain place
- Use of tape recorder with an audiotaped version of tests except for the reading test (Note: Reading Part 2A or 2B of the ELA test to a student is a nonstandard accommodation.)
- Use of Braille writer for recording responses
- Use of communications device to indicate responses
- Use of calculator (mathematics assessments only)

- Use of rulers as provided by Michigan Educational Assessment Program
- Use of pencils adapted in size or grip
- Use of list of formulae as provided by Michigan Educational Assessment Program
- Use of noise buffers
- Use of computer or word processing equipment (spell check, thesaurus and grammar check must be disabled)
- * Use of bilingual word-for-word translation dictionary for LEP students (no dictionaries that define or explain words or terms)
- Use of Braille ruler
- Use of acetate colored shield to reduce glare and increase contrast
- Use of voice-activated word processor (except for writing assessment)
- Use of devices or equipment to secure paper to desk

Test Format

- Use of lined or grid paper for recording answers
- Provision of Braille or large-print editions of the assessments
- Permission to mark answers in test booklet, to be transferred to answer folder by teacher or proctor
- Use of computer for task presentation
- Communication of test questions by audiotape except for the reading test (Note: Reading Part 2A or 2B of the ELA test to a student is a nonstandard accommodation.)
- Use of scribe for constructed-response items (student must indicate punctuation and spell all key words)
- Permission to accomplish subtests in different order

Accommodations not on this list will be considered "nonstandard," and MEAP test scores accomplished by use of non-

standard accommodations will not be considered eligible scores for Michigan Merit Award purposes. Examples of such nonstandard accommodations would include the following:

NONSTANDARD ACCOMMODATIONS

- Any accommodation not included as a standard accommodation that violates the Michigan Merit Award Test Administration Ethics Procedure
- Use of a calculator on any MEAP assessment other than mathematics assessments
- Use of electronic spell checkers, thesaurus or grammar check
- Use of a dictionary, thesaurus, or spelling book for mathematics, science, social studies, or reading assessments
- The reading or translation of any portion of Part 2A, 2B, or 3 of the ELA test in English or a student's native language
- Any test administration not directly supervised by a school district professional

Accommodations not included on the Standard Accommodations list, which in the opinion of school officials, parents, teachers, or other interested parties do not violate the MEAP Test Administration Ethics policy and do not interfere with the intent of the assessments, may be approved by the Michigan Merit Award executive director, pending review by the Michigan Merit Award Board.

Michigan's Targets for Adequate Yearly Progress

The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) requires that all students be assessed. In order to achieve Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), however, they must have, at a minimum, 95 percent of their students assessed at the building level, the district level, and in each required subgroup (economically disadvantaged students, students from major racial and ethnic groups, students with disabilities, and students with limited English proficiency). In addition, they must meet target attendance rates (elementary and middle school), graduation rates (high school), and attain target achievement goals in English language arts

and mathematics, or reduce the percentage of students in the non-proficient category of achievement by ten percent ("safe harbor").

NCLB, however, left it up to the states to determine their own target achievement goals. The only stipulation was that they reach 100 percent proficiency by the 2013/2014 school year. The following table shows the targets Michigan has established for the two required content areas (mathematics and English language arts). These targets were approved by the U.S. Department of Education (DOE).

MICHIGAN'S AYP TARGET ACHIEVEMENT GOALS

Year	Percent of Students "Proficient"					
	Mathematics			Reading/Language Arts		
	Elementary	Middle School	High School	Elementary	Middle School	High School
2002-2003	47%	31%	33%	38%	31%	42%
2003-2004	47%	31%	33%	38%	31%	42%
2004-2005	56%	43%	44%	48%	43%	52%
2005-2006	56%	43%	44%	48%	43%	52%
2006-2007	56%	43%	44%	48%	43%	52%
2007-2008	65%	54%	55%	59%	54%	61%
2008-2009	65%	54%	55%	59%	54%	61%
2009-2010	65%	54%	55%	59%	54%	61%
2010-2011	74%	66%	67%	69%	66%	71%
2011-2012	82%	77%	78%	79%	77%	81%
2012-2013	91%	89%	89%	90%	89%	90%
2013-2014	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

In Michigan, assessment scores are considered "proficient" if they fall within (1) Category 1 or 2 on the Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) assessments, or (2) "Surpassed the Performance Standard" or "Attained the Performance Standard" on the MI-Access assessments.

The DOE and the Broad Foundation have developed a Web site (<http://schoolresults.org/>) that provides the NCLB data that must be reported publicly, including AYP status. The data is organized by state, district, and school building.

Remember Appropriate Testing Practices Apply to MI-Access

The April 2002 issue of *The Assist* included an article titled "Proposed Merit Award Board Policy on MEAP Testing Practices." The policy was developed to help ensure (1) that MEAP assessments were administered fairly to all students and (2) that the assessment results are reliable and valid.

The proposed policy is now in place. To obtain copies of the final policy—referred to now as the "Michigan Educational Assessment Program Testing Practices"—go to www.meritaward.state.mi.us/mma/testingpolicy.htm. Click on "Michigan Educational Assessment Program Testing Practices," and a PDF will appear if you have Adobe Acrobat Reader on your computer. The MEAP office encourages MEAP Coordinators and others to print the document and share it as widely as possible with peers.

Why are we writing about the practices again? To remind readers that the same testing practices apply—where appropriate—to MI-Access. Assessment booklets, scan sheets, and results must be handled in a safe and secure manner at all times. Do not take them home, leave them on desks, or provide copies to parents or students. (Sample assessment booklets are available at www.mi.gov/mi-access if parents want to see what types of activities are included in the assessment.) We want to make sure that MI-Access, like the MEAP, is administered fairly and that results are reliable and valid.

PHASE 1 MI-ACCESS UPDATE

In order to comply with No Child Left Behind (NCLB) requirements, all states must indicate whether students are proficient on the English language arts (ELA) and/or mathematics assessments they take. While this is a fairly straightforward task for students taking the Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) assessments, it is more challenging for some alternate assessments, such as Phase 1 MI-Access (Participation and Supported Independence), in which academics are imbedded in the context of daily living skills.

Last spring, the MI-Access staff designated specific Phase 1 MI-Access Performance Expectations (PEs) as ELA or mathematics. The table

below shows those designations. The first column indicates the NCLB content areas that must be assessed in grades 4, 7, 8, and 11. The second column shows the PEs in the MI-Access Participation assessments that correspond with the NCLB content areas. The third column shows the PEs in the MI-Access Supported Independence assessments that correspond with the NCLB content areas.

Please note that even though only a few PEs are indicated as ELA or mathematics PEs, you still must administer EVERY assessment activity in an assessment booklet. You will use scores from only a few of those PEs, however, to calculate Adequate Yearly Progress.

NCLB and Phase 1 MI-Access Correspondence

NCLB Grades and Content Areas	Phase 1 MI-Access Performance Expectations (PEs)	
	Participation	Supported Independence
Grade 4 ELA	PE-1	PE-5
Grade 4 Mathematics	PE-2	PE-7
Grade 7 ELA	PE-3	PE-1
Grade 8 Mathematics	PE-2	PE-7
Grade 11 ELA	PE-3 and PE-4	PE-1 and PE-5
Grade 11 Mathematics	PE-5 and PE-2	PE-3 and PE-7

WE NEED YOUR FEEDBACK!

If you have not done so already, please give us your feedback on the Winter 2004 assessment administration process. There are four surveys:

1. the MI-Access 2003/2004 Training Materials Feedback Survey,
2. the Winter 2004 Coordinator Feedback Survey,
3. the Winter 2004 Assessment Administrator Feedback Survey, and

4. the MI-Access Live Teleconference Feedback Survey.

They are all relatively short and should not take too much time. Your insights will help us improve our materials, processes, and the MI-Access teleconference for next year.

To access the surveys, go to www.mi.gov/mi-access and click on "Survey Information."

GLOSSARY



Assessment Accommodation:

An adjustment in an assessment procedure, which is intended to minimize the impact of a student's disability on his/her performance on the assessment. Decisions regarding accommodations should be made on an individual, case-by-case basis, and should be based on the relative appropriateness to a disability and the impact the disability has on the student. The IEP Team, well in advance of the actual assessment, should make decisions about accommodations.

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP):

AYP is a formula introduced in No Child Left Behind and used by states, districts, and schools to ensure that a minimum percentage of students are achieving grade level standards in mathematics and English language arts. AYP targets, as required by NCLB, are set by individual states and apply to "all students" and each major student subgroup. If a major subgroup at the school or district level misses the AYP target, the school or district does not make AYP. A Title 1 school is in "school improvement status" if it fails to make AYP for two consecutive years in the same content area. Schools or districts in "school improvement status" that do not receive Title 1 funding do not have to take the same actions as Title 1 schools, but will face state-designed improvement activities.

Item Tryouts: A critical part of the assessment development process when, for the first time, students are administered newly developed assessment items using newly developed assessment materials. The feedback and data generated during tryouts are used to further refine assessments and accompanying materials.

The Assist

Important MI-Access Dates

Phase 2.1 MI-Access Item Tryout Assessment Window

April 1 - June 4, 2004

Interim Phase 2 BRIGANCE Achievement Standard Setting

April 26 - April 28, 2004

W2004 MI-Access Reports to Districts

June 4, 2004 (tentative)

**Ship Phase 2.1 Item Tryout Materials to
BETA/TASA NO LATER THAN June 14, 2004.**



Bookmark these Web sites:

www.matr.org

(Michigan's Assistive Technology Resource)

<http://www.aph.org>

(American Printing House for the Blind)

www.nochildleftbehind.gov

www.mi.gov/mde

(Michigan Department of Education Web site)

www.mi-access.info

(MI-Access Information Center)

www.mi.gov/mi-access

(MI-Access Web page)

www.meritaward.state.mi.us/mma/meap.htm

(Michigan Educational Assessment Program)

This newsletter related to the assessment of students with disabilities is distributed to local and intermediate superintendents, directors of special education, MI-Access Coordinators, MEAP Coordinators, SEAC, Special Education monitors, MDE staff, school principals, Parent Advisory Committees, and institutes of higher education. *The Assist* may also be downloaded from the Office of Special Education and Early Intervention Services section of the MDE Web site: **www.mi.gov/mi-access**.

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____ Related Services Providers
____ Parents

Michigan Department of Education
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